

it should remain after the first serious shock of arms. Great as was the responsibility, therefore, which fate and their own state of preparedness had thrust upon our North Carolinians, they were presently to exhibit a signal proof of their ability to meet it.

General Butler laid his plans carefully.* Instructions were given Brigadier-General Pierce, commanding at Hampton, to send forward Colonel Duryea's Fifth New York Regiment (Zouaves) at one o'clock on the morning of the 10th, by way of New Market Bridge, and thence by a by-road to a point between Little Bethel and Big Bethel, with the object of taking our outpost there in the rear. Colonel Townsend's Third New York Regiment, with a couple of mountain howitzers, was instructed to support Duryea, marching about an hour later. At the same time Colonel Phelps, commanding at Newport News, was directed to send out a battalion under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Washburn in time to make a demonstration upon Little Bethel in front, and to have him supported by Colonel Bendix's Seventh New York Regiment with two field-pieces.

Washburn's Battalion was made up of three hundred men from the First Vermont and three hundred men from Washburn's own regiment, the Fourth Massachusetts. The two field-pieces were of the Second United States Artillery (regulars), under command of Lieutenant Greble. The two mountain howitzers with Townsend were manned by a detachment from Colonel Carr's Second New York Regiment, "under the direction of a non-commissioned officer and four privates of the United States Army." The two supporting regiments, Townsend's and Bendix's, were expected to effect a junction at the fork of the road leading from Hampton to Newport News, about midway between New Market Bridge and Little Bethel. The movement was so timed that the attack on Little Bethel should be made at daybreak. In case of failure to surprise the outpost at Little Bethel, General Pierce, if he thought it expedient, was directed to attack the work at Big Bethel.

*"War of the Rebellion," page 77 *et seq.*